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TO: Deputy Director (Administration)
THRU: Chief, O & M Service
25X1A9a FROM: ███████████████

SUBJECT: Code Designations

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1. PROBLEM.

What can be done to tighten controls on the creation, assignment, utilization and recording of code designations (aliases, pseudonymn, cryptonyms, digraphs and indicators)?

2. FACTS

   a. Regulations of the former Office of Special Operations and Office of Policy Coordination prescribe procedures for control of code designations. No such Regulations or Procedures exist for other Agency components.

   b. OSO and OPC used approximately 90% of all code designations.

   c. Code designations are used in communications, in training, in covert procurement and financial accounting, and in other phases of Agency adminis- tration and operations.

   d. Certain code designations have legal connotations which preclude their haphazard use.

   e. Code designations are being used excessively. See Annex "A".

   f. There is need for coordination of procedures for utilization of code designations. See Annex "B".

   g. There is need for centralization of control of code designations. See Annex "C".

   h. I & S has surveyed the recording of code designations and their true name counterparts in various Agency components and has recommended a tightening of security measures.

3. DISCUSSION

   a. Code designations are designed to perform only one function: disguising covert or sensitive identities of persons, places, agencies, projects, operations and other data which must be protected from general disclosure. They should be used only when other security measures are insufficient.

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b. Uncontrolled and excessive use of code designations reduces their value as "Blinds", impairs Agency efficiency and constitutes a potential threat to security.

c. OSO and OPC Regulations provide for use of code designations, primarily in regard to communications. OSO Regulations are more detailed in prescribing procedures for the creation, assignment, recording, utilisation and centralisation of control (in Records Integration Staff) of code designations. These Regulations do not, and should not, however, establish broad Agency policies, nor do they provide for the greatest possible measure of control. Thus, in OSO and OPC, there has been frequently unnecessary and excessive use of code designations. Annexes "B" and "C" indicate awareness of a need for control, while Annex "B" indicates a lack of coordination between OSO and OPC.

d. Other Agency components have had to rely upon hearsay, upon occasional instructions from OSO and OPC and upon guess-work in their utilisation and control of code designations. In such components, particularly, there is a misunderstanding of the definitions and uses of code designations.

e. There is no specific delegation of authority to review need for code designations and to restrain excessive use. While there is some centralisation in area divisions, the authority has usually been delegated at too low a level for effective control, becoming a purely clerical control.

f. Examples of the potential dangers of uncontrolled use of code designations:

(1) haphazard creation of aliases and pseudonym. In two cases, it was discovered that the fictitious names created duplicated true names of CIA covert employees.

(2) overuse of code designations in communications. Since cables are already encrypted, the use of cryptonyms in cables immeasurably complicates deciphering by addressees. In addition, some code designations serve no purpose, when the remainder of the text of the message immediately discloses the concealed identities.

(3) Use of aliases instead of pseudonyms. Pseudonyms are legal names, for intra-Agency purposes, and can be used to sign legal documents. Aliases are invalid for this purpose. Pseudonyms have been used outside CIA, thus compromising their security; although only aliases are designed for external use. Other examples can be cited.

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3. Security in the recording of code designations and their true name counterparts is an important factor in the control of code designations. I & S has conducted surveys and has reported that, in several Agency components, code designations and their true name counterparts are being interfiled, frequently in one set of index cards. This system of filing presents a potential threat to the cover of CIA personnel. In other Agency components, separate files are maintained for code designations and their true name counterparts, and the only common source of identification is a central numbering system. Such a system is considered secure by I & S.

4. CONCLUSIONS.--

a. While code designations must be used in many cases, their excessive use may be more damaging than use of true identities.

b. Agency components in general have no procedural guides in the control of code designations.

c. There is a need for stronger control in the creation, procurement, assignment, utilization and recording of code designations. This need is recognized by all CIA components.

5. ACTION RECOMMENDED.-- It is recommended that:

a. Annex "D", which is a proposed CIA Regulation, be adopted. All elements of the Agency have unconditionally concurred in this proposed Regulation except the Comptroller's office. The Comptroller has concurred with the provision that, because of the administrative problems involved, some time will be required before his office can comply with paragraph F(2), which requires separate recording and filing of code designations and true name counterparts.

b. All officers and employees of CIA make a concerted effort to check unnecessary and improper use of code designations.

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3 Attach.
Tabs A, B, C & D

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